LEXICAL MEANING OF WORDS

Khaydarova Nigora

Scientific supervisor, Andijan state institute of foreign languages

Abdumannobov Muhammadali

Student, Department of Theory and Practice of the Russian Language, group of 304

Andijan state institute of foreign languages

E-mail: Alicho1806@gmail.com

Abstract*: This article focuses on the phenomenon of lexical meaning as a core element of the semantics of a word. The aim is to examine its nature, its distinction from grammatical meaning, and the various forms in which it can manifest. Special attention is paid to the denotational and connotational aspects of lexical meaning, its role in communication, and its dependence on cultural and contextual factors. This analysis is relevant not only to linguists but also to anyone interested in semantics, translation, or language teaching.*

Keywords: *Lexical meaning, denotation, connotation, semantics, stylistic value, emotive charge, cross-cultural linguistics.*

Lexical meaning represents the stable semantic content of a word that remains unchanged across its various grammatical forms. In contrast to grammatical meaning, which reflects the word's syntactic and morphological features such as tense, number, mood, or case, lexical meaning is associated with the core idea or concept a word expresses. For instance, the word "write" and its forms "writes," "wrote," and "written" differ grammatically, yet they share the same fundamental semantic feature – the action of putting words on paper. This shared meaning is lexical, and it persists regardless of the syntactic changes a word undergoes. Therefore, lexical meaning can be understood as the permanent component present in all instances and variations of a word, enabling the speaker to communicate specific ideas consistently.

While the concepts expressed by grammatical and lexical meaning may sometimes overlap, the manner in which these meanings are conveyed is fundamentally different. For example, the notion of plurality can be communicated lexically, as in the word "plurality," or grammatically, as in the plural forms "books" or "trees." In the latter case, the lexical component refers to a specific object (a book or a tree), while the grammatical form indicates that more than one object is meant. This example clearly illustrates that grammatical meaning reflects structural information, whereas lexical meaning denotes content and reference.

Lexical meaning itself is composed of two primary components: denotational and connotational. The denotational aspect of lexical meaning refers to the objective reference of the word – the concept, object, or phenomenon it identifies. It enables speakers of the same language to understand each other by providing a shared core of meaning. For example, when a doctor and a dancer use the term "pneumonia," they may differ in their level of expertise, but the referent – a specific medical condition – remains the same. Without this basic denotational function, communication through language would not be possible. It provides the foundation upon which mutual understanding is built, serving as a mental link between word and reality.

Alongside the denotational component, words often carry a connotational element, which encompasses emotional, stylistic, or evaluative associations that go beyond objective meaning. The word "hovel," for instance, denotes a small dwelling, but its connotation suggests poverty, dirt, and discomfort. This connotational layer adds expressive and cultural depth to language, allowing speakers to convey attitudes, emotions, and aesthetic judgments. Certain connotative associations are nearly universal, particularly in figurative uses of animal names. A "donkey" may refer to a foolish person, a "monkey" to a mischievous child, and a "serpent" to someone deceitful or malicious. These metaphorical uses rely on culturally ingrained symbolism that links animal traits to human behavior.

However, connotative meanings are not always universal and may vary significantly across cultures and languages. The English word "bug" can colloquially refer to a foolish person or an obsessive enthusiast, whereas the equivalent term in

Ukrainian, "жук," lacks such figurative uses. Similarly, while the word "shark" in English can describe a cunning swindler, its literal Ukrainian counterpart "акула" does not share this connotation. Such differences highlight the role of cultural context in shaping lexical meaning and present challenges for translators and language learners.

Lexical meaning may also include emotive or stylistic value, particularly in informal or expressive speech. Words like "kid" or "lassie" differ in tone and emotional resonance from their more neutral counterpart's "child" and "girl." Interjections such as "ouch" or "wow" are dominated by emotive force and serve primarily expressive functions. This layer of meaning is not always inherent in the word itself but may arise from context, speaker attitude, or situational use. Even words that are semantically neutral in their dictionary definitions can acquire emotional weight depending on how and when they are used. The subjective emotional impact of a word, therefore, is often determined not only by its inherent properties but also by extralinguistic factors.

Lexical meaning is also classified by other parameters. It may be concrete or abstract depending on whether the referent is tangible or intangible. Words such as "table," "apple," or "book" are concrete, whereas "hope," "freedom," or "love" are abstract. Another distinction is between primary and secondary meaning. For example, the word "wall" in "the wall of the room" has a literal primary meaning, while in "the wall of misunderstanding," it takes on a metaphorical, secondary interpretation. Lexical units may also be bookish or colloquial in tone. A "young man" may be referred to as a "lad" or a "chap" in informal settings, with each word carrying its own connotative nuance and stylistic implication.

In conclusion, lexical meaning is a multifaceted and essential aspect of language. Its primary function is to link language to the external world through denotation, but it also carries significant emotional and cultural weight through connotation. While grammatical meaning allows for syntactic structure and formal precision, lexical meaning conveys the actual content of speech. The ability of words to embody both objective reference and subjective coloration makes them powerful tools of human expression. Understanding the structure, types, and cultural variability of lexical meaning is fundamental for linguists, translators, and language educators

alike. This knowledge not only enhances theoretical comprehension of semantics but also contributes to more effective and nuanced communication across different linguistic and cultural communities.

REFERENCES

1.   Cruse, D. A. *Lexical Semantics*. Cambridge University Press, 1986.

2.   Lyons, J. *Semantics*, Vol. 1–2. Cambridge University Press, 1977.

3.   Jackson, H., Amvela, E. Z. *Words, Meaning and Vocabulary*. Continuum, 2000.

4.   Palmer, F. R. *Semantics*, 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press, 1981.

5.   Ullmann, S. *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning*. Basil Blackwell, 1962.